construction of Farrakha Barrage. In addition, the indiscriminate fishing and industrial pollution also affected the Hilsa population as well as the stock of other commercially important fishes in the river.

(c) A hatchery with a nursery farm near the Farrakha Barrage to produce Hilsa seed for stocking the river Ganga above the Barrage is under construction to improve the Hilsa fishery in the river.

Production of seeds

1356. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalised any plan to produce sufficient quantities of seeds of high yielding maize hybirds in different parts of the country; and

(b) if so, the hybrid-wise and state-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) and (b) Planning, production and distribution of seeds including high yielding maize hybrids is primarily the responsibility of State Governments. Seed requirement and availability position is assessed by the ministry during Zonal Seed Review meetings prior to the commencement of the sowing season i.e. Kharif and Rabi.

As per Kharif 1992, Zonal Seed Review meetings, Maize hybrid-wise statewise position of requirement and availability is annexed.

[See appendix CLXIII, Annexure No. 26]

Shortage of maize in the country

1357. SHRI SURESH KALMADI:
DR. ABRAR AHMED:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the acute shortage of maize in the country has resulted in reduction of poultry feeds;

(b) whether it is also a fact that as a result thereof; there has been a major setback in the production of eggs and poultry products; and

(c) if so, what steps Government have taken to provide adequate raw materials particularly maize for the benefit of the poultry and animal husbandry sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI K. C. LENKA): (a) and (b) The poultry industry in the country has been passing through a difficult period, mainly due to the shortage and high prices of maize. Government have received representations to the effect that many poultry farms, especially the small ones, have been adversely affected due to the increase in price of important feed ingredients.

(c) The Government have taken the following main steps for making available raw materials including maize for the poultry sector:—

(i) State Government have been requested to intervene to prevent hoarding of maize by traders.

(ii) NAFED has been asked to procure maize locally and also to explore the possibility of import of maize from abroad to make available to the poultry sector.

(iii) Steps are being taken for increasing the production of maize in the country.

(iv) Finance assistance has been provided to State Level Poultry Corporations/Federations and similar other organisations for streamlining the marketing of eggs and poultry and supply of balanced poultry feed at reasonable prices.

(v) Ministry of Food has been requested to make available some wheat for the exclusive use of the poultry industry.